



House of Representatives

General Assembly

File No. 448

February Session, 2014

Substitute House Bill No. 5536

House of Representatives, April 8, 2014

The Committee on Public Health reported through REP. JOHNSON of the 49th Dist., Chairperson of the Committee on the part of the House, that the substitute bill ought to pass.

AN ACT CONCERNING CONTINUING EDUCATION REQUIREMENTS FOR PSYCHOLOGISTS.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Assembly convened:

1 Section 1. (NEW) (*Effective October 1, 2014*) (a) Except as provided in
2 subsection (e) of this section, for registration periods beginning on and
3 after October 1, 2014, each psychologist licensed in accordance with
4 chapter 383 of the general statutes shall complete a minimum of ten
5 hours of continuing education during each registration period. For
6 purposes of this section, "registration period" means the twelve-month
7 period for which a license has been renewed in accordance with the
8 provisions of section 19a-88 of the general statutes and is current and
9 valid.

10 (b) Qualifying continuing education activities shall be related to the
11 practice of psychology and shall include courses, seminars, workshops,
12 conferences and postdoctoral institutes offered or approved by: (1) The
13 American Psychological Association; (2) a regionally accredited
14 institution of higher education graduate program; (3) a state or

15 regional psychological association; (4) a postdoctoral training center;
16 (5) a nationally recognized provider of continuing education seminars;
17 or (6) a behavioral science organization that is professionally or
18 scientifically recognized. Not more than five continuing education
19 units shall be completed via the Internet, distance learning or home
20 study. Qualifying continuing education activities may include a
21 licensee's presentation of an original paper, essay or research-based
22 poster relating to the practice of psychology or a formal lecture in
23 psychology at a professional conference or participation in a panel
24 presentation before a group of psychology professionals, provided not
25 more than five continuing education units shall be completed by such
26 activities. A licensee who has earned a diplomate from the American
27 Board of Professional Psychology or American Board of Psychological
28 Hypnosis during the registration period may substitute credits toward
29 the diplomate for continuing education requirements for such period.
30 For purposes of this section "continuing education unit" means fifty to
31 sixty minutes of participation in accredited continuing professional
32 education.

33 (c) Each licensee shall obtain a certificate of completion from a
34 provider of continuing education for all continuing education activities
35 that are successfully completed and shall retain such certificate for not
36 less than three years after the license renewal date for which the
37 continuing education activity was completed. Upon the request of the
38 Commissioner of Public Health a licensee shall submit such certificate
39 to the Department of Public Health. A licensee who fails to comply
40 with the continuing education requirements prescribed in this section
41 may be subject to disciplinary action pursuant to section 20-192 of the
42 general statutes.

43 (d) A licensee who holds a professional educator certificate that is
44 endorsed for school psychologist or counseling psychologist issued by
45 the State Board of Education pursuant to chapter 166 of the general
46 statutes may substitute professional development activities described
47 in section 10-148a of the general statutes for continuing education
48 activities required in accordance with this section.

49 (e) A licensee applying for license renewal for the first time shall be
50 exempt from the continuing education requirements under subsection
51 (a) of this section. In individual cases involving medical disability or
52 illness, the Commissioner of Public Health may grant a waiver of the
53 continuing education requirements or an extension of time within
54 which to fulfill the continuing education requirements of this section to
55 any licensee, provided the licensee submits to the department an
56 application for waiver or extension of time on a form prescribed by the
57 commissioner, along with a certification by a licensed physician of the
58 disability or illness and such other documentation as may be required
59 by the commissioner. The commissioner may grant a waiver or
60 extension for a period not to exceed one registration period, except the
61 commissioner may grant additional waivers or extensions if the
62 medical disability or illness upon which a waiver or extension is
63 granted continues beyond the period of the waiver or extension and
64 the licensee applies for an additional waiver or extension. The
65 commissioner may grant a waiver of the continuing education
66 requirements to a licensee who is not engaged in active professional
67 practice, in any form, during a registration period, provided the
68 licensee submits a notarized application on a form prescribed by the
69 commissioner prior to the end of the registration period. A licensee
70 who is granted a waiver under the provisions of this subsection may
71 not engage in professional practice until the licensee has met the
72 continuing education requirements of this section.

73 (f) Any licensee granted a waiver of the continuing education
74 requirements pursuant to the provisions of subsection (e) of this
75 section shall be required to complete five hours of continuing
76 education not later than six months after the date on which such
77 licensee returns to active practice. In addition, such licensee shall
78 comply with the certificate of completion requirements prescribed in
79 subsection (c) of this section.

80 (g) Any licensee whose license has become void and who applies to
81 the department for reinstatement of such license pursuant to section
82 19a-88 of the general statutes, shall submit with such application

83 evidence documenting that such applicant has successfully completed
84 five hours of continuing education within the one-year period
85 immediately preceding the date of application for reinstatement.

86 (h) The commissioner may accept continuing education activities
87 completed by a licensee in another state or country to meet the
88 requirements of this section.

This act shall take effect as follows and shall amend the following sections:		
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Section 1	<i>October 1, 2014</i>	New section
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Statement of Legislative Commissioners:

In sections (1)(a) and 1(g), "19a-88b" was changed to "19a-88", for accuracy.

PH *Joint Favorable Subst.*

The following Fiscal Impact Statement and Bill Analysis are prepared for the benefit of the members of the General Assembly, solely for purposes of information, summarization and explanation and do not represent the intent of the General Assembly or either chamber thereof for any purpose. In general, fiscal impacts are based upon a variety of informational sources, including the analyst's professional knowledge. Whenever applicable, agency data is consulted as part of the analysis, however final products do not necessarily reflect an assessment from any specific department.

OFA Fiscal Note

State Impact: None

Municipal Impact: None

Explanation

The bill, which creates continuing education requirements for psychologists, does not result in a fiscal impact to the Department of Public Health (DPH) as it is not anticipated to affect the number of psychologist license renewals or reinstatements.

The Out Years

State Impact: None

Municipal Impact: None

OLR Bill Analysis**sHB 5536****AN ACT CONCERNING CONTINUING EDUCATION REQUIREMENTS FOR PSYCHOLOGISTS.****SUMMARY:**

This bill generally requires licensed psychologists to complete at least 10 hours of continuing education (CE) during each one-year license registration period. The requirement applies to registration periods beginning on and after October 1, 2014. A licensee applying for his or her first renewal is exempt from this requirement.

The bill specifies what activities qualify for psychologists' CE and sets related recordkeeping requirements. It allows the Department of Public Health (DPH) commissioner to grant extensions or waivers for medical reasons. It also allows her to grant waivers for licensees who are not actively practicing.

It requires someone whose license became void due to failure to timely renew it to submit evidence documenting successful completion of five hours of CE within the year preceding his or her application for reinstatement.

Finally, the bill provides that a licensee who fails to comply with the CE requirement may be subject to DPH disciplinary action, such as license revocation or suspension, censure, letter of reprimand, probation, or a civil penalty.

EFFECTIVE DATE: October 1, 2014

CONTINUING EDUCATION FOR PSYCHOLOGISTS***Qualifying Activities***

Under the bill, qualifying CE for psychologists must be related to

the practice of psychology. The CE must include courses, seminars, workshops, conferences, and postdoctoral institutes offered or approved by:

1. the American Psychological Association;
2. a regionally accredited higher education institution graduate program;
3. a state or regional psychological association;
4. a postdoctoral training center;
5. a nationally recognized CE seminar provider; or
6. a professionally or scientifically recognized behavioral science organization.

The bill defines a CE unit as 50 to 60 minutes of participation in accredited continuing professional education. It specifies that no more than five CE units, presumably per registration cycle, may be completed through:

1. online, distance learning, or home study or
2. presenting an original paper, essay, or research-based poster, presenting a formal lecture at a professional conference, or participating in a panel presentation before a group of psychology professionals.

If a psychologist has earned a diplomate (board certification) from the American Board of Professional Psychology or American Board of Psychological Hypnosis during the registration period, he or she may substitute credits earned from this activity for that period's CE requirements.

The bill allows psychologists who hold a professional educator certificate as a school psychologist or counseling psychologist to substitute professional development activities set forth in the

education statutes for those described in the bill.

It also allows the commissioner to accept CE activities that the licensee completed in another state or country.

Recordkeeping

The bill requires licensees to obtain certificates of completion from the CE provider for all CE activities they complete. Licensees must keep them for at least three years after the corresponding license renewal, and submit them to DPH upon request.

Waivers or Extensions

The bill allows the DPH commissioner to grant a waiver or an extension of time for a licensee who has a medical disability or illness. A licensee seeking a waiver or extension must submit to DPH (1) an application, on a form the commissioner prescribes; (2) a licensed physician's certification of the disability or illness; and (3) any other documentation DPH may require.

The bill allows the commissioner to grant such a waiver or extension for up to one registration period. She can grant additional waivers or extensions if the disability or illness continues beyond this period and the licensee reapplies to DPH.

The commissioner can also grant a waiver from the CE requirements to a licensee who is not engaged in any form of active professional practice during the registration period. To apply for this waiver, the licensee must submit a notarized application to DPH, on a form the commissioner prescribes, before the end of the registration period.

The bill prohibits a licensee granted a waiver (for either reason) from resuming professional practice unless he or she meets the bill's CE requirements. Anyone granted a waiver must also complete five hours of CE within the first six months of his or her return to active practice.

COMMITTEE ACTION

Public Health Committee

Joint Favorable Substitute

Yea 26 Nay 0 (03/21/2014)